AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraphs [0014], [0015], and [0017] with the following:

[0014] The retention sleeve 14 has a smooth cylindrical section 34 that has an inner diameter that is slightly larger than the outer diameter of the threaded shank portion 28 so that displacement of the threaded fastener 12 in the retention sleeve 14 is possible. At the upper end of the smooth cylindrical section 34, the retention sleeve 14 has a narrow location in the form of a circumferential necking 36 extending radially to form a slightly bulged contour on the inner side of the retention sleeve 14. The circumferential necking 36 has an inner diameter at the location of its smallest cross section that is slightly smaller than the outer diameter of the threaded shank portion 28 of the threaded fastener 12, but slightly larger than the outer diameter of a smooth-cylindrical region of the threaded shank portion 28 of the threaded fastener 12. Thus, in the region of the necking 36, there is practically no play present between the retention sleeve 14 and the threaded fastener 12.

[0015] The upper end of the retention sleeve 14 has a radially outwardly projecting head flange 38 that abuts the radially projecting collar 32 of the head portion 30 and acts as a stop or limiter to prevent the wave spring 16 from being disposed past the head portion 30. The outer diameter of the head flange 38 is slightly larger than the outer diameter of the radially projecting collar 32 of the head portion 30. However, the invention can be practiced where the outer diameter of the head flange 38 is equal to or less than the outer diameter of the radially projection collar 32. Preferably, the retention sleeve 14 is manufactured of a metallic material similar to the threaded fastener 12 by a shaping procedure. However, the retention sleeve 14 may also be manufactured by swarf-producing machining, for example, by turning, or the like. The threaded fastener 12 and the retention sleeve 14 are commercially available from ITW Automotive Products GmbH & Co. of Iserlohn, Germany.

[0017] Tests were performed to evaluate the performance of the fastener assembly 10 of the invention and compare the performance to that of a conventional fastener assembly using a rubber grommet instead of the wave spring of the invention. In a pressurization test, one valve cover was assembled using a traditional rubber grommet and another valve cover was assembled using the wave spring 16 of the invention. The valve cover assemblies were tightened using 14 N/m of torque. Initial standoffs were taken and recorded. A 95% water/5% soap solution was sprayed around the perimeter of the assemblies. Initial air pressurization to 5 psi was performed with the results recorded. After initial air testing, the valve covers were then placed into a 250°F oven for three days. On the third day, the valve covers were removed from the oven where standoffs and oil pressurization test to 5 psi was performed with results recorded. Oil was changed and the valve covers were returned to the oven at a temperature of 250°F. Pressurization, standoffs and oil change also occurred on days 7, 10, 14 and 17 with the results recorded. On day 21, after final standoffs and pressurization testing to 5 psi were taken and recorded, the valve covers were disassembled and a visual inspection was performed. The results of the testing are shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

Below are marked-up copies the replaced paragraphs above, showing the changes made:

[0014] The retention sleeve 14 has a smooth cylindrical section 34 that has an inner diameter that is slightly larger than the outer diameter of the threaded shank portion 28 so that displacement of the threaded fastener 12 in the retention sleeve 14 is possible. At the upper end of the smooth cylindrical section 34, the retention sleeve 14 has a narrow location in the form of a circumferential necking 36 extending radially to form a slightly bulged contour on the inner side of the retention sleeve 14. The circumferential necking ~~26~~ 36 has an inner diameter at the location of its smallest cross section that is slightly smaller than the outer diameter of the threaded shank portion 28 of the threaded fastener 12, but slightly larger than the outer diameter of a

smooth-cylindrical region of the threaded shank portion 28 of the threaded fastener 12. Thus, in the region of the necking 36, there is practically no play present between the retention sleeve 14 and the threaded fastener 12.

[0015] The upper end of the retention sleeve 14 has a radially outwardly projecting head flange 38 that abuts the radially projecting collar 32 of the head portion 30 and acts as a stop or limiter to prevent the wave spring 16 from being disposed past the head portion 30. The outer diameter of the head flange 38 is slightly larger than the outer diameter of the radially projecting collar 32 of the head portion 30. However, the invention can be practiced where the outer diameter of the head flange 38 is equal to or less than the outer diameter of the radially projection collar 32. Preferably, the retention sleeve 14 is manufactured of a metallic material similar to the threaded fastener 12 by a shaping procedure. However, the retention sleeve 14 may also be manufactured by swarf-producing machining, for example, by turning, or the like. The threaded fastener 12 and the retention sleeve 14 are commercially available from ITW Automotive Products GmbH & Co. of Iserlohn, Germany.

[0017] Tests were performed to evaluate the performance of the fastener assembly 10 of the invention and compare the performance to that of a conventional fastener assembly using a rubber grommet instead of the wave spring of the invention. In a pressurization test, one valve cover was assembled using a traditional rubber grommet and another valve cover was assembled using the wave spring 16 of the invention. The valve cover assemblies were tightened using 14 N/m of torque. Initial standoffs were taken and recorded. A 95% water/5% soap solution was sprayed around the perimeter of the assemblies. Initial air pressurization to 5 psi was performed with the results recorded. After initial air testing, the valve covers were then placed into a 250°F ~~over~~ oven for three days. On the third day, the valve covers were removed from the oven where standoffs and oil pressurization test to 5 psi was performed with results recorded. Oil was changed and the valve covers were returned to the oven at a temperature of 250°F. Pressurization, standoffs and oil change also occurred on days

7, 10, 14 and 17 with the results recorded. On day 21, after final standoffs and pressurization testing to 5 psi were taken and recorded, the valve covers were disassembled and a visual inspection was performed. The results of the testing are shown in Figs. 3 and 4.